

ders monopoly impossible. Again, a butcher from Camberwell can easily attend at Smithfield, whereas a market on the northern or eastern side of London would force him to absent himself from home all night. The travelling expenses of the butcher must, in the end, be paid by the public; any injudicious choice of the new market which might augment them, would, therefore, have for effect to increase the price of meat. Careful investigation must, then, be made into the sources of supply, the mode of arrival, and the centres of consumption, before any definite course be adopted. But we must bear in mind that after all the difficulties of this question are not so great as they appear. The number of butchers who buy live cattle is small comparatively; in Paris only about one-half attend the markets, the rest buy the dead meat. Doubtless in London the proportion is about the same, for our dead meat market increases in importance every day, owing to the railways and steamboats. A change in the market might perhaps only augment the number of retail butchers; and as the wholesale buyers would divide their expenses over a greater amount of capital in movement, the increased expense would not be sensible. But again, even supposing that the whole augmentation be borne by each separate butcher, it is more than questionable whether the weight he would gain by purchasing animals in a more healthy state would not amply compensate the money he would spend. A bullock in a London stable, whatever be the mode upon which he has been fattened, cannot lose less than 8 lbs. weight per day; what must be the loss upon the poor animals worried, driven, and tortured through the long agony of their exposure on the market? And the public health! Who can estimate the difference in the nutritive qualities of meat supplied by animals in a normal condition from that furnished by the wearied, feverish victims of our present most absurd and barbarous system?

The difficulty of a change in the locality of the market is, nevertheless, very great. Not so, however, the change in the system of slaughtering. For a number of years the proprietors of the present establishments might be allowed to enjoy all their existing liberties or rights, on the simple condition of executing the works necessary to isolate their establishments from the public gaze, to insure proper drainage and removal of offal, and to furnish the means of effectually cleansing their establishments. Facilities should be given for the erection of public slaughter-houses, either by companies or by municipalities. In all cases where they have been built in France, the revenues have been such as to make such constructions good speculations. At Paris, in 1847, the revenues (gross) were 1,200,000*fr.*, nearly; the expenses, including employés, repairs, water, lighting, &c., were not 140,000*fr.*, leaving net 1,060,000*fr.* to pay the interest on a capital of 18,000,000*fr.* In the town of Havre the abattoirs are built upon an 18½ years' lease; and yet the proprietor makes money by his speculation. At Caen the abattoirs produce a net revenue of 24,000*fr.*, to pay the interest of a capital of 300,000*fr.* Everywhere the results are about the same; nor can there be any reason to doubt but that in England the results would be equally favourable. The butchers of Paris, at first, violently opposed the establishment of the abattoirs; but now they are so convinced of their utility and commodity that they would almost as vigorously oppose any return to the former system. Indeed, it must evidently be to the interest of the butcher that his meat be killed in the most perfect conditions to insure its preservation, and to satisfy the public that every precaution is taken to insure a supply of wholesome meat.

In the matter of public inspection of the quality of the food exposed to sale, we, a nation who read our Bible much, would do well to take example by the laws of Moses. They were, it is true, given for a nation inhabiting warm climates; but whether in England or in Syria, it cannot be a matter of indifference to eat of animals healthy or unhealthy. As it is, not the slightest control is exercised; and it is a fact well known in the trade, that lately a noble duke sent to Smithfield a large number of sheep tainted with the small-pox. Such things could not occur in any civilized country

but our own. We push the horror of the intervention of the Government authorities to such an extent, that it appears we prefer to be poisoned rather than let them interfere. It is true, however, that the absurdities of the Sewers Commission fully warrant our objections to governmental action.

As for the other trades connected with the conversion of the carcasses of animals, slaughtered either for our food or for the dogs and cats of London, they should, under no possible circumstances, be retained in the centre of the town. Science has not been able hitherto to obviate the foul odours they give rise to; they should, therefore, be, without hesitation, consigned to such positions as would guarantee the public health against their deleterious effects. And yet in the present day, whilst the press is crying forth, and with reason, against the imperfect system of the London sewerage, we allow the air of the very centre of the town to be contaminated by the various trades which have been for so many years carried on near Field-lane.

In face of the public apathy, what is to be done in these most important matters? To whom are we to turn,—where are we to address ourselves, to secure a calm disinterested examination? In the House of Commons we are met by flat jokes from Mr. B. Osborne, about his father being offended by the smells of the Westminster sewers,—an argument, as was before observed, as absurd as deficient in taste. The Home Office is to examine the question; but as, in all probability, a set of lawyers and crotchety doctors will be named upon the commission, the results will, in all probability, be about as successful as those attained by the Sewers Commission. The corporation of the City of London have already given us the means of judging of the temper with which they would be likely to take up the question. Their interest in the maintenance of the existing state of things is, moreover, so great, that they cannot reasonably be expected to be impartial. It is to the press only we can turn, with any confidence, to aid in the removal, or at least in the amelioration, of this gigantic nuisance. The fourth power of the realm must again teach the others that their duties cannot be neglected with impunity. Could the evil effects arising from the present state of the neighbourhood of Smithfield, and its congeners in filth, be confined to the places themselves, we would say, in God's name, let those who like such scenes enjoy themselves to their heart's content. But the moral and physical pestilences spread far and wide. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," and carries the germs of sickness in every direction. The restless mind, contaminated in the same scenes, leaves them to spread its direful action elsewhere. It is the duty of every one to strive to eradicate both these sources of evil,—more especially is it the duty of the noblest and most powerful instrument we possess to spread the happiness and comfort of our race. It is the duty of every one to protest loudly against the existence of a state of things which, it cannot be too often repeated, is a blot upon the civilization of our country,—a shame and a disgrace to any Christian land, and which must, if allowed still to revel in all the rich luxuriance of its mental and physical pollution, be a curse to the people who tolerate it.

G. R. B.

NORTHAMPTON CORN EXCHANGE COMPETITION.—The directors have selected two designs, but the names of the authors are not yet stated. Two correspondents complain of the circular which they have received; one says:—"The pompous curtness without courtesy of the notification is only another nail driven, it is to be hoped, in the coffin of competition. Thanks—brief thanks—it would seem, are matters that enter not into the consideration of these gentlemen directors as being in any way necessary in the light of a slight return for the attention bestowed in their behalf by competing architects. Who are the chosen two? Perhaps, indeed, the rejected competitors may consider themselves honoured by having their designs returned duly carriage-paid.—*£*."

WILTON CHURCH.—The architects wish us to say that the cost of Wilton Church was 26,000*l.*, not 36,000*l.*, as stated. The cost was given us on the spot as printed.

PLANS FOR THE DRAINAGE OF LONDON.

ON Monday, the 20th, the day appointed for the consideration, by the Sewers Commission, of the plans of Mr. Phillips and Mr. Austin, for the entire drainage of London, and such others as might be sent in up to that date, the court was well attended by commissioners, and the space allotted to visitors was crowded to excess. Mr. C. Johnson presented a letter from Mr. Bailey Denton, civil engineer, which set forth that he was most anxious to present a plan, but that the time that had been specified was insufficient to prepare the same, and asking for the period to be extended.—It appeared that fifty-eight plans had been sent in; and that amongst the competitors were some of the first civil engineers of the day.* Mr. Cheadwick was for sending all the plans to the Works Committee.—Mr. Leslie, that the court should consider them. The latter gentleman also suggested the necessity of care to prevent piracy of ideas. Mr. Alderman Lawrence thought they should not be tied, as a whole, to any one plan, as they might find it expedient to take portions of several, each portion being good in itself, but yet not good as a distinct plan, which principle had been adopted in several public buildings,—the Royal Exchange and London-bridge as instances. They might borrow ideas, not with the view of stealing them, but to reward those by whom they were given.

After a long and irregular conversation the following provisional resolutions were put *seriatim*, and agreed to:—

"That all proposals and plans sent to the court before and during its sitting be received."

That the time for amending the present plans, and for sending in other plans, be extended to October 1, 1849.

That each of the competitors who have sent in plans be required to send in, in the course of this week, a concise statement of the main features, whether in principle or in details, of his own plan, and that such statements be printed for the commissioners.

That outline maps, with such information as to altitudes as exist in the office, be forthwith prepared and lithographed, and that each of the competitors who have already sent in plans be, on his application for the same, supplied with a copy thereof gratis, and that future competitors be supplied with copies thereof, at a charge sufficient to cover the cost of paper and printing."

In pursuance of the order of a former court. Mr. Joseph Smith had attended the process of the various borings along the proposed line of tunnel sewer, and it was resolved, "That the sections of the borings be lithographed when finished, and circulated among the commissioners, and given to competitors."

In reference to these borings, it will be recollected that at the first court held, on the proposed tunnel of Mr. Phillips, Dr. Buckland asserted unequivocally "that there was not an atom of London clay between Rotherhithe tunnel and the base of Shooter's Hill," and that "it glanced off at the north-east corner of St. Paul's." Since that time evidence of the most satisfactory nature, and from unquestionable authority, has been obtained, that it does exist, and in large quantities, in places altogether denied in the speech of Dr. Buckland, as will be found in the following statement:—

At Greenwich Marshes, opposite Blackwall, 55 feet of London clay.

Near the London Dock and St. Katharine's Dock, 55 feet.

At Bermondsey, 55 feet.

Near London-bridge, 130 feet.

And, extending upwards, it was found at Lambeth, 160 feet; at Westminster, 170 feet; at Kennington, 170 feet; and at Brompton, 237 feet; and for a considerable distance above London-bridge the bed of the river is cut in the blue clay.

Thus it may be considered that, at all events, one of the difficulties anticipated has really no existence.

* The statements of some of the competitors have been forwarded to us, and we shall of course be happy to receive others. To print them, however, as requested, is out of the question.